

BOOK REVIEW
The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader,
Becoming the Person Others Will Want to Follow

by John C. Maxwell
reviewed by Joseph C. Piff

This book, “The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader, Becoming the Person Others Will Want to Follow,” is meant by the author, John C. Maxwell, to be complementary to another of his books, “The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership.” To be used in the most effective manner, each book should be studied and practiced. These are short books, so short that a fast reader may be able to complete either one of them in a single sitting. The author advises against this method – “Read a chapter, and then give it some time. Use it to reflect, review, and renew.”

Each quality has its own chapter. Each chapter is divided into six parts: (1) an opening banner that states the quality and gives two quotes to reinforce its value; (2) an anecdotal section to give a historical perspective to the quality; (3) the “Fleshing It Out” section, to fully define the quality and its value to you as a person; (4) the “Reflecting on It” section, wherein questions are asked to help you probe yourself, looking for your self-actualization of the quality; (5) the “Bringing It Home” section, giving steps to take to instill the quality into your daily life; and, (6) the “Daily Take-Away” section, a statement to reinforce your understanding that each quality is an essential part of the whole.

Each of these chapters is short, just seven or eight pages. The whole book is only 156 pages! However, a lot of wisdom is imparted in these few words. The words are carefully chosen for maximum impact – the author WANTS you to accept his premise. His anecdotes employ contemporary and historical figures of high standing to emphasize each point. I think you will find the leaders he chooses to illustrate each quality interesting.

Here is the list of the 21 qualities:

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| 1. Character | 8. Focus | 15. Relationships |
| 2. Charisma | 9. Generosity | 16. Responsibility |
| 3. Commitment | 10. Initiative | 17. Security |
| 4. Communication | 11. Listening | 18. Self-Discipline |
| 5. Competence | 12. Passion | 19. Servanthood |
| 6. Courage | 13. Positive Attitude | 20. Teachability |
| 7. Discernment | 14. Problem Solving | 21. Vision |

So, should you still read the book? What makes you so certain that you LIVE these qualities daily and that you are the best leader you can be?